

NSC BRIEFING

MOROCCO

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- I. There is growing popular pressure for evacuation of all foreign forces, US as well as French and Spanish, although government might still accept declaration of principle of willingness to evacuate. This popular feeling has been building up since independence, but particularly since February.
 - A. Moroccan Premier Balafrej implied to NY Times correspondent on 21 July that US will be asked to evacuate four air force bases, but possibly not the naval air facility at Port Lyautey. All are owned by France and operated jointly with French forces.
 - B. CIA for several weeks has reported Moroccan officials desire declaration US willingness to pull out; then might favor prolonged phase-out (as much as 5 to 10 years) of US operations.
 1. Demands for the phased-out evacuation might also include:
 - a request for new US loans.
 - C. King--who in February endorsed evacuation foreign troops--told Ambassador Cannon at farewell audience that base negotiations--begun May '57--be stepped up to early conclusion.
- II. French also face new difficulties in negotiating troop withdrawal. On 12 July France proposed partial evacuation of 30,000 ground troops and retention four training bases (had earlier asked for 18 bases).
 - A. While this offer largely in line with Moroccan govt demands, left-wing faction of ruling Istiqlal party has marshaled popular pressure against Moroccan compromise. Agreement now unlikely.

B. Evacuation Spanish troops--now estimated at 15,000--demanded

12 April, but Morocco has not recently pressed for withdrawal.

III. Agitation for evacuation sharpened by last week's developments in Middle East. Balafrej also told NY Times his govt did not approve US-British intervention.

A. Consultative Assembly--over objections of King--on 18 July condemned Anglo-American operations. Press has repeatedly denounced West's "neo-colonialism as threat to world peace."